THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) and.(b) Government is implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme known as Area Intensive and Madarsa Modernization Programme (AIMMP) under which Madarsas which volunteer to introducde modern subjects, in addition to their traditional curriculum, are provided financial assistance for the expenditure on salary of teachers to teach modern subjects, for science-maths kits and for book banks. The financial assistance is given through the respective State Governments.

Setting up of village courts .

372. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

whether Government has announced that 7,000 village courts would be set up in the country;

if so, the details thereof and the present status thereof especially in Andhra Pradesh;

what steps Government would take to man these courts; and

the present status of courts in each and every village in the country especially in Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) and (b) A Bill for establishing Gram Nyayalayas is pending before Rajya Sabha. The State Governments will be consulted before bringing into force the provisions of this enactment. It is proposed to establish one or more Gram Nyayalayas for every Panchayat at intermediate level or a group of contiguous Panchayats at intermediate level in a district.

Presiding officers to these courts will be appointed by the concerned State Governments in consultation with the respective High Courts.

Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Funds for modernisation of courts

† 373. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

the details of funds allocated for the modernization of lower courts and High Courts/ Supreme Court and also their structural expansion in the country during the last Five Years Plan and the current Five Year Plan;

whether these funds are sufficient; and

(c) if not, whether Government proposes to raise the amount of this fund for the current Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) to (c) An outlay of Rs. 700 crore was provided in theTenth Five Year Plan for modernization of all the courts including, computerization of the High Courts and the city courts, development of infrastructure facilities for the judiciary and the construction of High Courts, in the current

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Five Year Plan period, the outlay for construction of courts including High Courts through development of infrastructure, their modernization and computerization of all courts has been enhanced to Rs. 1470 crore.

Reservation in judiciary

374. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

whether Government has received any proposal to extend reservation in judiciary for SCs/STs;

if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon;

if not, the reasons therefor; and

the present status of SC/ST persons in judiciary?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) to (d) The Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions and Law and Justice. In their Report submitted to the Parliament on the Judges (Inquiry) Bill, 2006 has recommended bringing the higher judiciary under the ambit of reservation.

Appointment of Judges of the Supreme Court of India and High Courts are made under articles 124 and 217 of the Constitution of India, respectively, which do not provide for reservation for any caste or class of persons.Any change in the present system would require Constitutional amendment. No statistics is, therefore, maintained regarding the nubmer of SC/ST Judges in the Supereme Court and the High Courts.

So far the District and Subordinate Courts are concerned, appointments of Judicial Officers for the same is done by respective State Governments/High Courts.

Amendment in Contempt of Courts Act

375. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minsiter of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

whether Government proposes to amend the Contempt of Courts Act;

if so, the details of the proposed amendments; and

whether any Bill for amending the Act is proposed to be introduced during the Budget Session?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Setting up of more courts

376. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Chief Justice of India has recently urged Government to set up more courts with better infrastructure in view of huge number of pending cases;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto;